

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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P R 040448Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4364

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5839

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB

SUBJECT: TRAN GUOC BUU, PRESIDENT OF CVT, TO VISIT WEST GERMANY

1. THE GERMAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR, GERHARD KONIG, TOLD LABATT MAY 3 THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT TRAN QUOC BUU AND NGUYEN DUC DAT HAD APPLIED FOR GERMAN ENTRY VISAS IN KUALA LUMPUR FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 28 TO MAY 9. THIS TRIP WAS NOT INCLUDED IN BUU'S ORIGINAL TRAVEL PLANS. KONIG CONSIDERS BUU'S VISIT IMPORTANT BECAUSE OF DECISIONS BEING CONSIDERED BY THE GOG ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT TO CONTINUE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION ASSISTANCE TO CVT.

2. KONIG EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUING THE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION-FINANCED INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY INSTITUTE (ISI) PROGRAM OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH VIETNAM, PARTICULARLY THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE CVT SOCIAL WELFARE CENTERS. KONIG SAID THAT HE AND HIS AMBASSADOR, DR. HORST VON ROM WERE INFORMED THAT THE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION MAY SOON BE ABSORBED BY THE MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHOSE MINISTER, ERHARD EPPLER, HAS ALLEGEDLY EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ISI BEFORE TAKING IT OVER. GERMAN EMBASSY OFFICERS HERE VIEW SUCH AN INVESTIGATION AS A POSSIBLE MOVE TO STOP THE ISI PROGRAM. VON ROM AND KONIG THINK THAT THE ISI PROGRAM SERVES AN OBVIOUS NEED FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND ITS PRESENCE HAS AN EVEN GREATER POLITICAL VALUE. THEY STRONGLY BELIEVE THE
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PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONTINUED.

3. WE KNOW THAT LUTZ BEHER, A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF MINISTER EPPLER, IS NOT A FRIEND OF CVT OR THE GVN. BEHER WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR THE ISI WHEN IT STARTED IN 1966. HE AND HIS VIETNAMESE WIFE ARE IDEOLOGICALLY ALIGNED WITH THE VIETNAMESE "THIRD FORCE."

4. WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUATION ISI PROGRAM IN SVN AND REQUEST EMBASSY BONN TO CONSIDER PROFERRING A DISCREET SUGGESTION IN THE RIGHT PLACES THAT MIGHT PERSUADE THE GOG TO CONTINUE THE ISI PROGRAM.

5. WE KNOW THAT DR. BRUNO HECK, CHAIRMAN OF THE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION, IS SYMPATHETIC TO PROGRAMS IN SOUTH VIETNAM. PERHAPS A MEETING WITH HIM OR HIS REPRESENTATIVES WOULD BE USEFUL.

6. COMMENT: BUU DID NOT INTEND TO VISIT WEST GERMANY WHEN HE PLANNED HIS AROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP. HOWEVER, TWO DEVELOPMENTS THAT OCCURRED AFTER COMPLETING HIS ITINERARY MIGHT HAVE CAUSED HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND. THE FIRST WAS A VISIT BY MR. WALKER, A KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION OFFICIAL, JUST PRIOR TO BUU'S DEPARTURE. THE SECOND IS THE PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR THE AFFILIATION OF BUU'S FARMER-WORKER PARTY WITH THE ASIAN PACIFIC SOCIALISTS WHILE IN SINGAPORE AND WELLINGTON. THE LATTER OUGHT TO TEMPER SOME OF THE HOSTILITY TOWARD CVT KNOWN TO EXIST AMONG GERMAN LABOR/SOCIALIST POLITICIANS.
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